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SELF-HELP PROGRAMS: INNOVATIVE OPTIONS FOR ACHIEVING SELF-SUFFICIENCY

REPORT

OF THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HUNGER
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 1988

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*Effective July 13, 1987.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To: Members of the Select Committee on Hunger
From: Mickey Leland, Chairman

I commend to your attention the enclosed Committee Report, "Self-Help Programs: Innovative Options for Achieving Self-Sufficiency." This paper provides an expanded account of the variety of self-help programs operating in the United States and the potential these activities have for helping low income persons improve their standard of living and attain economic self-sufficiency. This document also provides information on the problems associated with the development, implementation, and maintenance of self-help projects and recommendations on what steps can be taken to encourage program expansion.

Sincerely,

MICKEY LELAND, *Chairman.*

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SELF-HELP PROGRAMS: INNOVATIVE OPTIONS FOR ACHIEVING SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Introduction

The House Select Committee on Hunger conducted a hearing on May 16, 1986, to examine the role "self-help" programs play in assisting low-income persons improve their living standard and work toward attaining economic self-sufficiency. Motivated by the findings and recommendations presented during these proceedings, the Committee began an examination of the various types of self-help programs currently operating in the United States which seek to achieve these goals.

This study involved a comprehensive literature review and research on the topic of self-help organizations including examination, analysis, and compilation of information from surveys, case studies, reports, committee hearings and relevant descriptive statistics. In addition, Select Committee staff prepared and circulated a questionnaire to the directors of self-help programs in twenty states across the country. The survey was designed to: examine the services self-help programs provide to assist low income individuals move toward economic self-sufficiency; give examples of the types of programs which have been effective in responding to the needs of service recipients; and, solicit information from program administrators on actions which could be taken to improve operations of self-help programs. Congressional Research Service staff provided assistance in the development of format and questions for the survey. Between November 11, 1986, and March 27, 1987, the Select Committee received thirty-four completed questionnaires from twenty states and the District of Columbia. These programs reported serving approximately 1.4 million people in 1986.

The results derived from the thirty-four responses are not intended to be representative of all self-help programs in the United States. Rather, they are used to illustrate the varied grassroots activities initiated by the poor to help improve their standard of living. Absence of a comprehensive self-help program clearinghouse makes random sampling of self-help programs difficult. Additionally, the Committee has chosen to focus on programs designed to alleviate conditions associated with hunger, thus, addressing a smaller facet of the broad scope of self-help programs:

Historical View of Self-Help Programs

The development of self-help organizations and programs can be traced to the initiation of consumer cooperatives, trade unions, ethnic group associations and religious groups in the United States and Great Britain. Originally, many of these organizations were established to provide services which were not available through ex-

isting institutions. For example, in nineteenth century England, "low-class" persons banded together to form Friendly Societies which were established to combat poor living conditions. In the 1930's unemployment cooperatives were established in California to address economic hardships resulting from the Great Depression and an organization called Self Help was formed by a group of concentration camp survivors to provide advice on employment and lend emotional support to their immigrant peers. Many of these early groups served as prototypes for current self-help programs.[1]

Current Trends in Self-Help Program Development

In 1986, the President's Office of Policy Development issued a report, *Up From Dependency,* which utilized the following six criteria to identify self-help programs:

1. The primary population involved with the programs were low-income rather than middle-income individuals;
2. The major focus of the program served to enhance and further self-sufficiency of the poor through economic or social initiatives;
3. There was extensive grassroots involvement and low-income people actively participated in the development, implementation, direction or leadership of the programs;
4. The programs did not rely primarily on government support;
5. The programs were operated by community-based groups that were not controlled by a government agency or large national organization; and,
6. The programs have acknowledged success; they were known to other groups inside and outside the community.[2]

Self-help organizations have been established in urban, rural and suburban areas and serve diversified people who span many racial, ethnic and age groups.[3] Although twenty-four regional self-help clearinghouses have been created to serve as referral centers to those seeking assistance, there is no exhaustive list of programs; and, information which cites a precise number of projects does not exist.[4]

In 1981, Sam Brown, former ACTION director during the Carter Administration, published an article, "Self-Help: An Old Idea Whose Time Has Come", discussing the incorporation of self-help programs into welfare reform considerations. He noted that an often overlooked approach for improving the responsiveness of aid programs for the poor involves integrating these services with self-help projects. Through this partnership, persons would reap the benefits of immediate assistance and gain support in developing long-term solutions to the problems they confront while working to achieve and maintain independence from public assistance pro-

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[1] Alan Gartner and Frank Riessman, "Self-Help in the Human Services," New York: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1977, pp. 13–15.

[2] "Up From Dependency: A New National Public Assistance Strategy," Supplement 3, p. I–3, Office of Policy Development, Executive Office of the President, December 1986.

[3] Ibid., p. I–2.

[4] James Mann, "Behind the Explosion in Self-Help Groups," U.S. News and World Report, May 2, 1983, p. 33.

grams.[5] He estimated that 50,000 self-help groups work to maintain control over their resources and utilize technical assistance from the Federal Government in pursuit of economic self-sufficiency goals. Brown also stated that the majority of these groups were established between 1966 and 1981.[6]

While no standardized typology can be used to categorize self-help organizations, the following list does appear to represent the areas in which the efforts of most of these groups are focused: economic development, education, employment opportunities, housing, social services, health services, community organizing, and food provision.[7] These activities were also the focus of respondents to the Select Committee poll.

For example, fifty-nine percent of the organizations responding to the Committee's questionnaire cited involvement in the provision of food. Fourteen percent of the directors focused on education, job training and employment. Twenty percent of the directors provided advocacy and community organizing services for program participants. Other services cited included childcare, housing preservation, and loans for small income-generation projects. (See Appendix A).

The report by the President's Office of Policy Development addresses the potential role for community-based self-help initiatives to assist low income individuals and families to achieve an improved standard of living. This study defined self-sufficiency programs as those which sponsor activities that enhance: "the economic well-being of low income people directly through business or community development, employment training or placement or daycare for low income working parents; and, the social well-being of low income people by providing quality education, housing, health, strengtening families or promoting responsible social behavior." [8]

The report also identified self-help programs as those in which low income individuals play an active role in developing, implementing and directing their activities. Further, there are a number of characteristics which are common to the majority of self-help programs regardless of the service they provide. First, many of the 380 self-help programs responding to the survey began as a result of grassroot initiatives started by low income individuals. Second, most of the programs surveyed indicated that low income individuals play integral roles in directing program activities. Third, low income persons volunteer their participation in the programs, thereby enhancing their personal self-help process. Finally, although many of the programs were established to address one issue, they often evolved into multi-service programs or changed their focus altogether to address new problems facing their constituent population.[9] Eighty percent of the program managers polled by the Select Committee on Hunger operated multi-service programs, even though they most likely began with a single focus.

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[5] Sam Brown, "Self-Help: An Old Idea Whose Time Has Come," Public Welfare, Winter, 1981, p. 14.
[6] Ibid., p. 16.
[7] Washington Consulting Group, Inc., "Uplift: What People Themselves Do," Utah: Olympus Publishing Co., 1974, (Table of Contents).
[8] "Up From Dependency: A New National Public Assistance," Supplement 3, p. I-5.
[9] Ibid., pp. II-1 through II-5.

Problems of Self-Help Programs

The number of self-help programs has grown rapidly over the past fifteen years, and a number of problems have accompanied their expansion. Several experts have identified three major obstacles frequently confronting self-help programs.

First, many fledgling programs may not succeed because of the lack of funding in their early developmental stages.[10] Although private contributions from the community may provide substantial support for self-help groups, many organizations continue to articulate a need for increased funding.[11]

Second, there is limited information available on self-help programs. While a National Self-Help Clearinghouse and twenty-four regional offices exist, they offer a limited amount of descriptive information on self-help groups. Additionally, there is little research on organizational development, structures and on the broader concept of the self-help movement as a tool for supplementing public assistance programs.[12]

Third, despite an increase in the number of self-help programs and non-profit service organizations, there appears to be a lack of coordination between programs and groups providing services.[13] Considering the growth in the number of programs, this may often result in duplicative services in some areas and insufficient services in others. Lack of coordination may also waste scarce financial and human resources.

Eighty-eight percent of the program managers questioned by the Select Committee indicated that they maintained formal ties with other community organizations to improve coordination of services. Sixty-nine percent of the respondents noted that when the needs of clients could not be met through their programs, they provided referral services. The services to which administrators most frequently referred clients were emergency food services, the Food Stamp Program, the Aid to Families with Dependent Children Program, housing services and education programs.

Future Trends in Self-Help Programs

The growth in the number of self-help programs over the past fifteen years warrants consideration of some of the changes that can be anticipated in future program structures and operations. Journalist Bruce Stokes points to the need for the establishment of a parallel structure of special liaison offices at the national, state and local levels to facilitate the development of self-help groups and programs. For example, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development maintains an Urban Homesteading Division, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture has a special urban gar-

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[10] Sam Brown, "Self-Help: An Old Idea Whose Time Has Come," Public Welfare, Winter 1981, p. 16.

[11] "Up From Dependency: A New National Public Assistance," Supplement 3, p. II-6.

[12] David Horton Smith, Karl Pillemer, "Self-Help Groups As Social Movement Organizations: Social Structure and Social Change," *Research in Social Movement, Conflicts, and Change, a Research Annual*, Vol. 5 (1983): p. 230.

[13] National Council of Welfare, "Poor People's Groups: A Report of the National Council of Welfare on Self-Help Problem Solving by Low-Income Communities," (Ontario, Canada, 1972), p. 10.

dening program.[14] The creation of offices designed to address the specific needs of self-help groups in these two particular areas, may mark the beginning of such endeavors.

Also, technological resources including computer system networks may be used to access information from a number of agencies to improve coordination of resources. One system, Handsnet, provides information on news items, available resources, the status of state, local, and federal legislation, and other relevant information to twenty shelters and twenty-four emergency food programs in California.

Self-Help Programs and the Problems of Hunger and Poverty

SELF-HELP AND FOOD PROVISION

Responding to the need for improved access to food, self-help organizations provide services to alleviate hunger and malnutrition through a number of innovative programs. According to survey respondents, these activities include community gardening, gleaning, low-cost food provision, nutrition education and food transport.

The Cheyenne, Wyoming Community Solar Greenhouse is typical of such organizations. Built in 1977 through volunteer efforts and funded initially by the now defuct Community Services Administration, it has served the city by providing fresh produce to the community throughout the year. In return for fresh fruits and vegetables, community members, including handicapped citizens and juvenile offenders, volunteer work in the garden for a specific number of hours weekly.

Although this organization was created to assist senior citizens on low or fixed incomes, the greenhouse has become so successful that it has expanded distribution to feeding programs serving low-income persons, including Meals on Wheels and the Salvation Army. In 1982, the program provided 14,000 pounds of fresh vegetables to the community—equalling approximately 9,200 servings to individuals and families.

Gleaning is the process of gathering unharvested vegetables, fruits, and grains from farmers' fields for raw or processed distribution to persons in need. In 1968 the Community Care Organization of Portland, Oregon, began distributing frozen and canned food obtained through gleaning to poor urban residents suffering from malnutrition and inadequate diets. Individuals from the community and volunteers from churches and community groups participate in the gleaning process. Area food producers and retailers donate food items and trucks whenever possible and civic groups and religious organizations provide free food processing equipment, jars, cans and freezer bags.

The program has expanded its services to meet the growing demand of the low income community in Portland. For example, in 1971 the program obtained eleven acres of prime farmland and a number of vacant lots inside the city where program volunteers began growing their own fruits and vegetables. Additionally, the association served hot breakfasts and lunches at an unused build-

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[14] Bruce Stokes, *Helping Ourselves: Local Solutions to Global Problems.* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company 1981) p. 125.

ing renovated with funds from the city planning board. Currently, the association maintains full-time, paid staff of nine previously unemployed persons and a volunteer force of fifty people.

During the summers of 1986 and 1987, the Emergency Resource Bank of Dayton, Ohio sponsored gleaning projects through which a total of fifty-two tons of food was gleaned from area farms and donated to food pantries for distribution to needy households. Through the encouragement of GLEAN OHIO, a statewide gleaning effort orchestrated in Columbus in May 1987, ten new projects in the state have been launched.

Low-cost food provision organizations like Self Help and Resource Exchange (SHARE), a network of food banks across the country, provide food packages to program participants. Growers and food producers make food available at, or below, wholesale prices to food banks. Members sign up with community host organizations (including churches, labor unions, housing projects, and community groups) to contribute volunteer time to package and prepare food for distribution. While food packages may vary to some degree monthly, they tend to provide meat, fruits, fresh vegetables and staples such as beans, rice or pasta to its participants on a consistent basis. There is no limit on the number of food packages that can be purchased; and anyone who pays the fee and contributes the mandatory volunteer service can participate. Currently, there are nine SHARE programs located in eight states across the country and one program in the developmental stages in Alabama.

The Maryland Food Committee, located in Baltimore, Maryland, has provided seed monies and technical assistance to eight community-based organizations to help establish alternative retail food markets. These stores sell food at a lower cost than established "mom and pop" type grocery stores. The Maryland Food Committee launched this effort in response to the problems many inner-city residents encountered trying to access quality food at competitive prices. Select Committee on Hunger research indicates that low-income neighborhoods are predominantly served by small independent grocery stores or "mom and pop" type stores, thereby limiting consumer choice. Because these establishments have little competition, their shoppers often pay higher prices for food.[15]

Currently, four community-managed stores are operating and four others are in the developmental stages. The markets have proven successful because: they offer prices that average twenty percent below their competitors in their service area; they redeem food stamp coupons; and they provide services which are responsive to the nutritional and economic needs of the community.

SELF-HELP AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

The Census Bureau reports that in 1986, the latest year for which statistics are available, 32.4 million persons in this country, or 13.6 percent of the population, lived in poverty ($11,203 for a family of four).[16] "Progress Against Poverty in the United States",

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[15] U.S., Congress, House, Select Committee on Hunger, *Obtaining Food: Shopping Constraints on the Poor.* Committee Print, 100th Congress, 1st Session, 1987: p. 3.

[16] U.S., Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. *Money Income and Poverty Status of Familes and Persons in the United States: 1986 Current Population Reports,* pp. 37-38.

a 1987 report issued by the Congressional Research Service, cites the following three factors strongly correlated with poverty in the United States: education, employment, and geographic location.

First, the incidence of poverty in families with heads of household who have not achieved a high school education tends to be higher than in those families whose heads of households have finished high school. Second, a higher percentage of unemployed persons live below the poverty level than persons who are employed. In 1986, 32.4 percent of the families with an unemployed head of household lived in poverty. Finally, research indicates that higher concentrations of poverty are found in certain regions of the country. Existing data demonstrates that residents of Southern states tended to live below the poverty rate more often than persons residing in other parts of the country.[17] Because conventional public assistance programs have had mixed success in bringing participants out of poverty, self-help organizations have attempted to augment the resources of their participants and improve their standard of living.

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

The Dungannon Development Commission, a non-profit, grassroots organization located in the rural Appalachian Mountains of southwestern Virginia, offers assistance with housing, education, economic development and crisis intervention. The Commission, in cooperation with a local community college, offers courses which aid participants in obtaining high school equivalency diplomas, career study certificates and associate degrees. In 1986, 400 persons were enrolled in education programs through the Commission's extension service. The Commission also focuses on employment opportunities. One initiative, the development of a sewing cooperative, provided employment for thirty-four women during 1985.

New Paths to Achievement, a New York program, provides preemployment training services to chronically unemployed, single-parent women. Their curriculum was developed specifically to: provide women with practical skills to help them identify their options, organize their lives, and communicate effectively with other individuals; and, organize business, social welfare, education, and religious agencies into a well-coordinated network which addresses the unique needs of single-parent women.

The training component of the program involves a six- to ten-week period where participants attend four hour-long sessions per week. These workshops help the participants develop a sense of self-worth, leadership skills, effective and assertive communication skills and adult basic education skills. Sessions are taught by local peer women who have been trained by the Family Service Association of Nassau County, New York. Special events such as speaker seminars, town meetings and cultural and educational exchanges are also sponsored.

The community organizing component was initiated by a task force comprised of representatives from ten community service and

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[17] Thomas Gabe, Progress Against Poverty in the United States (1959 to 1986), Congressional Research Service. September 1987, pp. 23–24.

university agencies. This task force eventually evolved into a permanent advisory board representing women participants, social service, business, religious and educational organizations in the country. The program is making an attempt to link all services needed by single-parent women participating in public assistance programs who have children under the age of six. In conjunction with Nassau and Suffolk Counties, New Paths to Achievement has submitted proposals to New York State for support in launching Comprehensive Employment Opportunities Support Centers. These centers would consolidate all public assistance services for this population group into one building and develop an individualized plan for moving participants from the welfare rolls to permanent employment.

INCOME GENERATION PROJECTS AND MICRO-ENTERPRISE

Since the early 1980's, a number of community-based organizations have developed income-generating projects to assist low income persons achieve financial independence through self-employment. These projects entail development of micro-businesses such as craft-making, typing or auto repair services which may serve as a primary or supplemental income source for small-scale entrepreneurs. Programs may provide either small grants and/or loans (usually less than $10,000) for business start-up costs to qualified applicants who are unable to access traditional credit sources due to stringent requirements. Programs may also provide managerial and technical assistance to participants to insure that: the entrepreneur acquires the skills needed to manage the business effectively; and, loans are paid back according to schedule.

One national non-profit organization which funds women's income-generating projects, the Ms. Foundation for Women, was founded in 1975 with the goal of supporting the empowerment of women in the United States by funding projects which focus on: economic justice, child support, prevention of violence and leadership issues. The foundation operates an Economic Development/ Technical Assistance Project to provide grants to women's self-help grassroots organizations for income-generating projects. The foundation has made grants available from $2,000 to $10,000 to organizations such as Mountain Way Herbs and Arts, a women's cooperative located in Jellico, Tennessee which produces and markets Appalachian crafts to help local women achieve economic self-sufficiency. To date, the foundation has provided a total of three million dollars in grants.

A second income-generating program, Homeworkers Organized for More Employment (HOME), is a craft store established in the late 1960s by nuns who wanted to provide a means of income for themselves and poor welfare families who were unable to find gainful, consistent employment in rural sections of Maine. The store sells handicrafts made by women in their homes who are paid seventy-five percent of the selling price of the item. Craftmakers reported incomes from $10 to $1,500 per month for their items.

Because an increased number of community members indicated they wanted to contribute crafts but did not have craftmaking skills, the nuns opened a craft school which offered sewing, weav-

ing, leatherworking and pottery classes. VISTA volunteers were enlisted to teach "personal enrichment" and diploma courses to address the educational needs of the local residents who had not finished high school. School enrollment averages four hundred persons per year with students ranging from sixteen to fifty-nine years of age.

Women's World Banking, an international non-profit organization located in the Netherlands, was established in 1979 to: provide women with access to credit resources; build local economic support mechanisms which are able to address the specific needs of local women; and, establish an international communication and support network of women in business, finance, and grassroots organizations who can share mutual knowledge and expertise.

The organization maintains an affiliate office in Charleston, West Virginia which guarantees loans from local lending institutions to low-income women. The financial risk is shared jointly by Women's World Banking, the community branch and the local lending institution which awards the loan. To qualify for a loan, the applicant must provide assurances that: the business will be owned and primarily controlled by women; the owner will invest ten percent of her own capital in the venture; the owner will participate in managerial/technical assistance courses which are offered in the community; and, the owner will allow all business records to be reviewed by the loan committee of Women's World Banking. Since its inception in 1985, the West Virginia office has guaranteed a total of $60,000 in loans. Individual loans, which average $3,000, are used primarily for small business expansion; however, loans for small business start-up are also available. There are currently twenty-eight affiliate offices operating in the United States, and thirty additional offices are being developed.

The Southeast Arkansas Development District, a regional government council, operates a loan program within the boundaries of the Job Training Partnership Act (JPTA) geographic service delivery area. This organization seeks to deter and reverse regional economic decline by coordinating a variety of services including vocational education, employment security, health and human services, and economic development. The Development District established a revolving loan fund for business development with the stipulation that a specified number of jobs created, be offered to disadvantaged individuals in the community. Additionally, the Development District program coordinates its activities with the University of Arkansas Small Business Development Center, providing managerial and technical assistance to persons who have received loans. The Southeast Arkansas Development District has provided loans for diverse ventures which include an auto repair shop and a typing service.

THE USE OF TRANSFER PAYMENTS FOR BUSINESS CAPITAL

The majority of micro-enterprise ventures in the United States are financed through guaranteed loans or direct grants. However, testimony presented at an April 1988 Select Committee on Hunger hearing noted an emerging interest in utilizing transfer payments to fund small-scale business start-up activities for low income per-

sons. Transfer payment investment policy refers to the use of social insurance (i.e., unemployment compensation and social security) or means tested benefits (i.e., Aid to Families with Dependent Children and Supplemental Security Income) for capital to launch these micro-enterprises for the benefit of recipients.

The Budget Reconciliation Act approved by Congress in December 1987 (Public Law 100–203) authorizes the operation of a three state demonstration project where certain recipients of unemployment compensation would be able to use their benefits to start small business ventures. The U.S. Department of Labor is currently finalizing agreements on the operation of the pilot in Massachusetts and Oregon. The third state to participate has not yet been named. Under the general operational guidelines, up to three percent of the unemployment compensation recipients would be permitted to target their regular benefits toward the launching of micro-enterprise ventures. As participants in the "self-employment" program, they would be eligible to receive entrepreneurial training assistance sponsored by the state. A similar experimental program, pending implementation in Washington, would provide an option allowing individuals to receive their unemployment benefits in a lump sum which would average $4,000 to $5,000. Recipients would then be able to use these funds for initial business start-up capital or to leverage additional monies from conventional commercial lenders.

SELF-HELP AND HOUSING PROGRAMS

The citizens of the Homewood-Brushton neighborhood in the City of Pittsburgh formed Operation Better Block in 1975. This association organizes residents by blocks and provides them with funds to maintain their property and housing, with the goal of stabilizing property values. Operation Better Block has also successfully encouraged the city to repair and maintain streets, sewers and lighting; and, required landlords to repair and better maintain buildings. To date, 6,500 people from thirty different block associations have become involved in the project. The operation has impeded the physical deterioration and economic decline of this low income, inner-city neighborhood.

Common Ground, a non-profit coalition of community groups located in Dallas, Texas, provides housing and employment opportunities to low income residents of the city. Common Ground operates a Community Housing Program which acquires, renovates and sells or leases housing/rental units to families with annual incomes below $12,000. To date, thirty-two units have been renovated and fifty-four units are on-site with average acquisition, housemoving and renovation costing $28,000 through this program. Common Ground also operates a Community Job Employment Service, where job counselors assist city employers in locating suitable applicants in the neighborhoods where they are providing service. In addition, Common Ground manages: a Community Loan Fund for low income homebuyers; emergency housing for evicted and displaced families; a Community Development Credit Union; and, low income cooperative housing.

Self-Help Program Development Model

Although no uniform model exists for the development of self-help organizations, there seems to be a consensus among researchers on the steps involved in the creation and implementation of these projects regardless of the services provided. (See Appendix B). First, self-help organizations are formed to provide services that are not readily available through existing public or private structures.[18] Resources of groups directed solely towards economic self-sufficiency, do not meet the basic needs of individuals near or below the proverty level.[19] Many of these groups are started at the grassroots level by low income community residents themselves,[20] and are often initially staffed by volunteers.[21]

Second, the group will shift from an all-volunteer organizational framework to a more formalized structure by hiring permanent, full-time staff and creating a governing body, usually a Board of Directors. During this stage, the group will further develop the components of this formal structure by establishing an agency charter and a core budget, developing goals and program activities, and undertaking initial projects.[22] At the same time, groups work to increase their membership, build community support and solicit financial support.[23]

During the third stage, the group will work toward the goal of attaining economic self-sufficiency.[24] The organization will continue to undertake projects and expand services while modifying programs, formalizing organizational procedures and building stronger ties with the community.[25]

In the final stage of development, many groups may add programs and/or shift focus to meet the changing needs of their members.[26] As cited earlier, eighty percent of the program administrators responding to the Select Committee questionnaire, concurred on these general characteristics.

Conclusion

Five major conclusions resulted from the analysis of the information available. First, there has been a significant increase in the number of all types of self-help programs and a similar increase in those programs directed toward economic self-sufficiency.[27] In all

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[18] "Up From Dependency: A New National Public Assistance," Supplement 3, p. II-1.

[19] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Funding Sources for Neighborhood Groups. (HUD publication 1980), pp. 16.

[20] "Up From Dependency: A New National Public Assistance," Supplement 3, p. II-6.

[21] U.S. Deparement of Housing and Urban Development, Funding Sources for Neighborhood Groups. (HUD publication 1980), p. 18.

[22] Sam Brown, "Self-Help: An Old Idea Whose Time Has Come," Public Welfare, Winter 1981, p. 16.

[23] "Up From Dependency: A New National Public Assistance," Supplement 3, pp. II-6.

[24] National Council of Welfare, "Poor People's Groups: A Report of the National Council of Welfare on Self-Help Problem Solving by Low-Income Communities," (Ontario, Canada, 1972), p. 10.

[25] David Horton Smith, Karl Pillemer, "Self-Help Groups As Social Movement Organizations: Social Structure and Social Change," *Research in Social Movement, Conflicts, and Change, a Research Annual*, Vol. 5 (1983): p. 230.

[26] National Council of Welfare, "Poor People's Groups: A Report of the National Council of Welfare on Self-Help Problem Solving by Low-Income Communities," (Ontario, Canada, 1972), p. 10.

[27] Sam Brown, "Self-Help: An Old Idea Whose Time Has Come," Public Welfare, Winter 1981, p. 16.

likelihood, this trend will continue to respond to the inability of traditional public assistance programs to adequately meet the needs of all recipients.[28]

Second, despite contributions from private sources and individuals in the community, many self-help programs may be unsuccessful in the long run due to under capitalization in the early stages.[29] Sixteen percent of the program administrators interviewed indicated that they were forced to cut back services due to inadequate funding. Often, self-help organizations and non-profit service providers are forced to compete for limited private funding, individual contributions and voluntary human resources.

Third, self-help programs tend to evolve according to a developmental process. Although programs may offer different types of services, many groups tend to move through the following developmental stages:

1. Formation of an all-volunteer group in respond to an unmet need or an inadequately met need;
2. Formalization of organizational structure;
3. Achievement of economic self-sufficiency; and,
4. Modification of program goals to meet the changing needs of their recipient population.[30]

Fourth, the lack of comprehensive information on self-help projects in the country and their scope of service, prevents a thorough analysis of their potential.[31] Therefore, while it is possible to identify self-help programs which have been effective in addressing the problems of poverty and hunger on an individual level, it is difficult to measure accurately the macro-economic effect of these programs on poverty and hunger.

Fifth, there is generally a lack of coordination between self-help programs and non-profit service providers which may result in duplicative services in some localities and inadequate services in others.[32] Although the majority of program administrators interviewed indicated they referred clients to other organizations and maintained ties with other service providers in the community, it is not clear whether any pattern of coordination or centralized information source was in place for linking individuals with services.

A number of programs in operation across the nation offer low income persons improved access to food, shelter, education and employment. Unlike standard assistance programs, the primary thrust of self-help projects is to empower poor people to help themselves. While the Select Committee on Hunger does not purport to suggest that self-help programs offer a panacea to poverty and hunger problems in the United States, these activities have the po-

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[28] Thomas Gabe, Progress Against Poverty in the United States (1959 to 1986), Congressional Research Service. September 1987, pp. 23–24.

[29] "Up From Dependency: A New National Public Assistance," Supplement 3, p. II–6.

[30] Ibid., p. II–1; National Council of Welfare, "Poor People's Groups: A Report of the National Council of Welfare on Self-Help Problem Solving by Low-Income Communities," (Ontario, Canada, 1972), p. 10.

[31] David Horton Smith, Karl Pillemer, "Self-Help Groups As Social Movement Organizations: Social Structure and Social Change," *Research in Social Movement, Conflicts, and Change, a Research Annual*, Vol. 5 (1983): p. 230.

[32] National Council of Welfare, "Poor People's Groups: A Report of the National Council of Welfare on Self-Help Problem Solving by Low-Income Communities," (Ontario, Canada, 1972), p. 10.

tential to guide many low income people to economic self-sufficiency.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were developed based on the literature review, research and interviews conducted:

1. Financial and technical support for the development and implementation of clearinghouses and data banks should be provided to help expand the availability of information on self-help program types and services, and to assist self-help programs in developing methods to improve the coordination of their activities with those sponsored by non-profit service providers;

2. Funding should be made available for research to examine self-help program development and the effects of self-help programs on the problems of hunger and poverty;

3. Methods should be established to identify promising self-help programs and to provide adequate seed monies to help sustain them through early development stages. These funds might be administered through nongovernmental organizations (or other non-traditional means) which have facilitated development of self-help organizations at the community or neighborhood level; and,

4. Steps should be taken to further investigate the number and types of micro-enterprise credit programs in the United States and the prospects for utilizing transfer payment investment and related self-employment alternatives as a way to assist the poor to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

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APPENDIX A

*Frequency of responses to program types**

[Agencies responding]

Program type	*Number*
Community organizing/advocacy:	
Community organizing/advocacy	6
Worker organizing	1
Education, employment, and training:	
Classroom training	3
Education	6
Job placement assistance	4
On-the-job training	6
Regular employment	4
Subsidized employment	1
Food related programs:	
Buyer co-op	3
Community gardening	9
Farmers market/gleaning	4
Food processing, preserving	4
Food transportation	7
Lost cost food provision	14
Urban aquaculture	1

* Responses are not mutually exclusive.

APPENDIX B

CHART DEPICTING DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL

STEP I

Formation of an all-volunteer group in response to an inadequately met need.

STEP II

Formalization of organizational structures including hiring permanent staff, creating governing body, and development of organizational charter and program activities. Usually, program is not economically self-sufficient at this stage.

STEP III

Achievement of either continuous sources of funding and/or may become economically self-sufficient.

STEP IV

Modification of programs and/or complete changes in focus depending on the needs of the population served.

APPENDIX C

*Recommendations for improvement of community support services**

Recommendations:	*Frequency*
More money for social services	8
More money for transportation	3
More money for child care	4
More emergency housing	4
Less red tape/better access	5
Increased health care	0
More food services	2
More educational services	1
More job training	2
More self-help programs	2
More staff	1
More outreach	2
Expand rural services	1
More jobs	1
No recommendations	1
No response	11
Other	0

*Responses are not mutually exclusive.

APPENDIX D

*Recommendations for improvement in self-help programs**

	Frequency
Recommendations:	
More participation	1
Expansion	1
Larger staff	7
Better access to information	1
More funding	9
More outreach	3
More communication between agencies	2
More general resources	7
More advocacy	2
Technical assistance	1
No recommendations	0
No response	10
Other	4

*Responses are not mutually exclusive.

APPENDIX E

SELF-HELP PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Name _____

Address _____

Contact Person _____ Telephone _____

1. Program Characteristics (please circle all that apply):

   a. ON-THE-JOB TRAINING
   b. CLASSROOM TRAINING
   c. REGULAR EMPLOYMENT
   d. SUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT
   e. JOB PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE
   f. CHILD CARE
   g. LOANS TO ESTABLISH INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITY
   h. COMMUNITY GARDENS
   i. FOOD TRANSPORTATION
   j. FARMERS MARKETS GLEANING
   k. FOOD PROCESSING/PRESERVING
   l. GLEANING
   m. OTHER (please describe)_____

2. Please describe specific services provided: _____

3. When did your program begin? _____ (MONTH/YEAR)

4. What factors led to the establishment of your program? _____

5. How do people learn about your program (please circle all that apply)?

   a. WORD OF MOUTH
   b. ADVERTISING (Explain: _____)
   c. REFERRAL BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES
   d. REFERRAL BY LOCAL PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS
   e. OTHER (please specify) _____

6. a) Approximately how many persons did your program serve in 1986 (Please circle your answer)?

   a. 1-9 PERSONS
   b. 10-24 PERSONS
   c. 25-49 PERSONS
   d. 50-74 PERSONS
   e. 75-100 PERSONS
   f. OVER 100 PERSONS (please specify)____

   b) Since you began the operation of your program? _____ PERSONS

7. What is the average length of program participation for the people you serve (Please circle your answer)?

   a. 0-5 MONTHS
   b. 6-11 MONTHS
   c. 12-17 MONTHS
   d. 18-24 MONTHS
   e. OVER 24 MONTHS (please specify in months) _____

8. a) Are there any restrictions for participation (Please circle your answer)? YES NO
   b) [IF "YES"] Please describe the restrictions _____

9. a) Approximately, what percentage of your participants require retraining (If "Not applicable", please write in NA)? _____ % needing retraining
   b) Have no skills? _____ % with no skills c) Have limited skills? _____ % limited skills

10. Does your program involve training participants (Please circle you answer)?

    YES NO ⟶ [SKIP TO Q 12]

11. a) How many people were trained by your program in 1986 (Please circle your answer)?

    a. 1-9 PERSONS
    b. 10-24 PERSONS
    c. 25-49 PERSONS
    d. 50-74 PERSONS
    e. 75-100 PERSONS
    f. OVER 100 PERSONS (please specify) _____

    b) What types of training did your program provide? (Please circle all that apply)

    a. FOR EMPLOYMENT b. FOR INCREASING AVAILABILITY OF FOOD c. FOR HOUSING IMPROVEMENT d. OTHER

    c) [IF "FOR EMPLOYMENT" IN Q11b] Of those persons trained by your program in 1986, how many were employed result of the training (Please circle your answer)?

    a. 1-9 PERSONS
    b. 10-24 PERSONS
    c. 25-49 PERSONS
    d. 50-74 PERSONS
    e. 75-100 PERSONS
    f. OVER 100 PERSONS (please specify) _____

    d) How many of those persons are still employed (Please circle your answer)?

    a. 1-9 PERSONS
    b. 10-24 PERSONS
    c. 25-49 PERSONS
    d. 50-74 PERSONS
    e. 75-100 PERSONS
    f. OVER 100 PERSONS (please specify) _____

12. How do you monitor those who have completed your program (Please circle all that apply)?

    a. FOLLOW-UP PHONE CALLS
    b. CORRESPONDENCE
    c. FOLLOW-UP VISITS
    d. NO EFFORT MADE BECAUSE OF LACK OF RESOURCES
    e. OTHER (please specify) _____

13. What was the drop-out rate for your program in 1986? _____ % WHO DROPPED OUT

14. a) Does your program have a waiting list (Please circle your answer)? YES NO

    b) [IF "YES"] What is the number of person currently on your waiting list? _____ NO. OF PERSONS

15. a) What program activities provide the greatest benefit to your participants? _____

    b) What program activities provide the greatest benefit to your organization? _____

    c) What program activities provide the greatest benefit to your community? _____

OPERATIONAL INFORMATION

1. TOTAL PAID STAFF _____ FULL-TIME _____ PART-TIME _____
   TOTAL VOLUNTEER STAFF _____ FULL-TIME _____ PART-TIME _____

2. a) Do you have formal ties to other organizations (Please circle your answer)? YES NO

   b) [IF "YES"] What organizations are these (Please circle all that apply)?

   a. CHURCHES
   b. SCHOOLS
   c. INDUSTRY
   d. LOCAL/STATE GOVERNMENT
   e. OTHER (Please specify)_____

3. a) Does your organization provide referral services (Please circle your answer)? YES NO

   b) [IF "YES"] To what other services or programs (Please circle all that apply)?

   a. EMERGENCY FOOD
   b. FOOD STAMP PROGRAM
   c. AFDC
   d. SSI
   e. EDUCATION
   f. DAY CARE
   g. EMPLOYMENT
   h. JOB TRAINING
   i. HEALTH
   j. HOUSING
   k. UTILITY
   l. RENTAL ASSISTANCE
   m. OTHER (Please specify) _____

4. [IF "YES" TO Q3a, ABOVE] How is this referral provided? (Please circle all that apply)

   a. INFORMATION ON AVAILABLE SERVICES
   b. ASSISTANCE WITH APPLICATIONS
   c. ACCOMPANY APPLICANT TO SERVICE OFFICE
   d. OTHER (Please specify)_____

FUNDING INFORMATION

1. Please identify the source(s) of funding for your program and the percentage of contribution from the source.

   a. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT _____%
   b. STATE GOVERNMENT _____%
   c. MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT _____%
   d. BUSINESS _____%
   e. FOUNDATION _____%
   f. INDIVIDUALS _____%
   g. OTHER (Specify) _____%
   _____% _____%

2. In the past year, has your funding system: (please circle the letter of the answer that comes closest)

   a. ENABLED YOU TO MAINTAIN CONTINUOUS OPERATIONS OF YOUR PROGRAM WITHOUT MAJOR CUTBACKS IN SERVICE?
   b. REQUIRED YOU TO CUT BACK YOUR SERVICES BY AS MUCH AS 25 PERCENT BUT LESS THAN 50%
   c. REQUIRED YOU TO CUT BACK YOUR SERVICES BY AS MUCH AS 50 PERCENT OR MORE
   d. FORCED YOU TO CLOSE DOWN YOUR PROGRAM FOR MORE THAN A WEEK?

3. How does your budget break down in the following categories?

ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	$_____	_____%
PROGRAM OPERATION	$_____	_____%
CAPITAL INVESTMENT	$_____	_____%
OTHER	$_____	_____%

4. What percentage of administrative staff time is spent on both fundraising and obtaining public support?
   _____%

SERVICE AREA INFORMATION

1. Please name the geographic area that your program primarily serves.

   _____ CITY _____ COUNTY _____ STATE

2. Would you say that this geographic area is generally characterized by: (please circle all that apply)

   a. INDUSTRIAL GROWTH
   b. LACK OF INDUSTRY
   c. DECLINING INDUSTRY
   d. STABLE EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS
   e. HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT
   f. NONE OF THE ABOVE

3. How important would you say support services such as transportation, child and health care, and emergency food aid are for the participants in your program (Please circle your answer)?

   a. VERY IMPORTANT b. SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT c. NOT VERY IMPORTANT d. NOT SURE

4. How available are support services to program participants? (For each service, circle your answer)

Transportation	SUFFICIENT	LIMITED	UNAVAILABLE	NOT SURE
Child Care.....	SUFFICIENT	LIMITED	UNAVAILABLE	NOT SURE
Health Care.....	SUFFICIENT	LIMITED	UNAVAILABLE	NOT SURE
Emergency Food Aid.....	SUFFICIENT	LIMITED	UNAVAILABLE	NOT SURE

5. What recommendations, if any, would you make to improve support services? _____

6. What would you estimate is the average annual income for participants in your program? $_____ INCOME

7. What conditions, external to your program, hinder self-sufficiency for participants? _____

8. What other types of self-help programs would you recommend for your area? _____

9. What could be done to enhance your self-help program? _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE IN COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED FORM TO : HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON HUNGER, 507 HOB ANNEX 2, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONTACT MS. CHERYL YATES AT 202-226-5470 OR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS

(25)

APPENDIX F

LIST OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTIONNAIRE

Programs	Location
Action Against Hunger	Alamosa, CO
Appalachian Ohio Public Interest Campaign	Athens, OH
Butte Community Union	Butte, MT
Capital Area Community Food Bank	Washington, DC
Capital Area Food Bank	Austin, TX
Cecil County Community Nutrition Project	Elkton, MD
Center for Community Self-Help	Chapel Hill, NC
Centro Adelante Campesino	El Mirage, AZ
Delmarva Rural Ministries	Dover, DE
Delta Community Development Corp	Marianna, AR
Family Farm Organizing Resource	St. Paul, MN
Farm Labor Organizing Committee	Toledo, OH
Fare Share	St. Paul, MN
Food Share	Phoenix, AZ
Good Samaritans, Rural Cumberland Resources	Crossville, TN
Hartford Food System	Hartford, CT
Helping Organize for Pueblo's Empowerment (HOPE Alive)	Pueblo, CO
Lane County Clients' Council	Eugene, OR
Maryland Food Committee	Baltimore, MD
New River Community Action, Inc	Christiansburg, VA
North Shore Community Action Programs, Inc	Peabody, MA
Nueva Esperanza, Inc	Holyoke, MA
Rochester Peace and Justice Politics of Food	Rochester, NY
San Luis Valley Christian	Alamosa, CO
Save the Children—Hispanic Field Office	Espanola, NM
Self-Help Energy Conservation	Aloha, OR
Self-Sufficiency Food Production	Salt Lake City, UT
SHARE	Bronx, NY
SHARE	Milwaukee, WI
Sojourners Neighborhood Center	Washington, DC
Telamon Corporation	Hagerstown, MD
Washington County Community	Hillsboro, OR
Community Action Agency WSOCS Inc./CARE	Thomas, OK